

**Regulatory Amendment 20 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper  
Fishery of the South Atlantic Region  
(Regulatory Amendment 20)**

*Frequently Asked Questions  
April 2015*

**What is the purpose of Regulatory Amendment 20?**

Regulatory Amendment 20 would:

- Increase the commercial and recreational annual catch limits for snowy grouper as a result of the latest population assessment. The annual catch limits would increase each year from 2015 to 2019, and remain at 2019 levels until a new assessment takes place. The new values are:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Commercial Annual catch limit (pounds gutted weight)</b>	<b>Recreational Annual catch limit (pounds gutted weight)</b>	<b>Estimated Recreational Numbers of Fish</b>
Current	82,900	4,400	523
2015	115,451	23,647	4,152
2016	125,760	25,758	4,483
2017	135,380	27,729	4,819
2018	144,315	29,558	4,983
2019	153,935	31,529	5,315

- Increase the commercial trip limit for snowy grouper from 100 pounds gutted weight to 200 pounds gutted weight.
- Modify the recreational fishing season for snowy grouper from 1 per vessel per day all year to 1 per vessel per day from May through August with no recreational retention during the rest of the year.

**Why is Regulatory Amendment 20 necessary?**

- Regulatory Amendment 20 is necessary to continue rebuilding snowy grouper while minimizing, to the extent practicable, adverse social and economic effects.

**Who would be affected by Regulatory Amendment 20?**

- Commercial and recreational fishers who fish for snowy grouper in federal waters (3-200 miles offshore), off North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.

**When might Regulatory Amendment 20 be effective?**

- Following the comment period on the proposed rule and depending on the public comments received, a final rule may be published, and if implemented, regulations could be effective by Summer 2015.

**How can I comment on the Proposed Rule for Regulatory Amendment 20?**

- NOAA Fisheries is accepting comments on the proposed rule for Regulatory Amendment 20 from April 8, 2015, to May 8, 2015.
- Comments on Regulatory Amendment 20 can be submitted electronically via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA->

[NMFS-2015-0003](#) , click the “Comment Now!” icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments. Written comments can be submitted to the address below.

**Where can I get more information on Regulatory Amendment 20 and its Proposed Rule?**

- Contact NOAA Fisheries  
*By Mail:* Southeast Regional Office, c/o Nikhil Mehta  
263 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505  
*By FAX:* (727) 824-5308  
*By Phone:* (727) 824-5305
- Regulatory Amendment 20 and its Proposed Rule may be found online at the NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office Web site at:  
[http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable\\_fisheries/s\\_atl/sg/2015/reg\\_am20/index.html](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/s_atl/sg/2015/reg_am20/index.html)  
or the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council’s Web site at <http://www.safmc.net>.